

REMARKS

The foregoing Amendment and remarks which follow are responsive to the initial Office Action mailed January 26, 2010 in relation to the above-identified patent application. In that Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Specification due a minor informality in the Abstract, as well as Claims 4-8 and 12-15 as being in improper form. Additionally, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 6-7 and 9-14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Japanese reference JP 7204604. The Examiner also rejected Claims 1, 2, 5, 9, 10 and 13 under Section 102(b) as being anticipated by the Shiga et al. reference. Importantly, the Examiner also indicated that Claims 8 and 15 were allowable over the prior art of record.

By this Amendment, Applicant has amended the Abstract of the subject patent application to correct the informality identified by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's objection to the specification has been overcome. In addition, Applicant has cancelled Claim 8, and has amended independent Claim 1 to recite the features originally set forth in Claim 8. Due to Claim 8 having been deemed allowable by the Examiner, Applicant respectfully submits that the amendment of underlying independent Claim 1 to recite the features of Claim 8 has placed Claim 1 into condition for allowance. Additionally, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 2-7 are also in condition for allowance as being dependent upon an allowable base claim, i.e., Claim 1. Along these lines, Claims 4-7 have also been amended in a manner believed to overcome the objections advanced by the Examiner in relation thereto.

Similarly, Applicant has cancelled Claim 15, and has amended independent Claim 9 to recite the features originally set forth in Claim 15. Due to Claim 15 also having been deemed allowable by the Examiner, Applicant respectfully submits that the amendment of underlying independent Claim 9 to recite the features of Claim 15 has placed Claim 9 into condition for allowance. Additionally, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 10-14 are also in condition for allowance as being dependent upon an allowable base claim, i.e., Claim 9. Along these lines, Claims 12-14 have also been amended in a manner believed to overcome the objections advanced by the Examiner in relation thereto.

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On the basis of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the stated objections and grounds of rejection have been overcome, and that Claims 1-7 and 9-14 are now in condition for allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

If any additional fee is required, please charge Deposit Account Number 19-4330.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 3/17/10

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